

(Acts) Great Power and Great Grace

by Brian Brodersen

Brian Brodersen emphasizes the necessity of prayer and reliance on God's power for boldness in evangelism amidst opposition in his sermon on Acts 4.

Duration: 48:50

Scripture: Acts 4:23

Topics: "Evangelism", "Perseverance"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker reflects on the challenges of evangelism and spreading the gospel. He shares his personal experiences of ministry in London and Hungary, highlighting the difficulty of reaching people and making disciples. The sermon then focuses on Acts chapter 4, where the apostles faced opposition from religious authorities for preaching about the resurrection of Jesus. The speaker emphasizes the importance of persevering in the task of evangelism, despite the obstacles, and encourages listeners to continue sharing the message of Christ.

Transcript

Let's open our Bibles to Acts chapter 4 this evening. We're continuing on in our study of the Acts of the Apostles. And we've been in the fourth chapter for a few weeks looking at some of the different things that occurred there.

And so we're going to pick up this evening in verse 23, but just to give us some background to catch us up on where we are. As the Apostles were preaching to those that gathered because of the healing of the lame man, the religious authorities came upon them and arrested them, being grieved that they taught the people and preached to them the resurrection from the dead in the name of Jesus. And so after interrogating them, they sternly warned them not to speak at all nor to teach in the name of Jesus.

And that's where we pick up in the story. Verse 23 says, And being let go, they went to their own company and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said unto them. And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God.

And so they've been commanded by the authorities, don't talk about Jesus. Don't don't even mention his name. Don't teach anybody anything about him.

And of course, these people who gave that order to them, they had power behind their order. They had power to punish them further had they chosen to do so. On this particular occasion, they gave them more of a reprimand, but then this strict warning.

And so here they are, the apostles, those that had been commissioned by the Lord, those that had been called to go in to preach the gospel to everyone. Now they run up against the authorities and the authorities are telling them not to do it. So they're in a quandary.

What do they do? Do they listen to the civil authorities? I mean, after all, if they don't, they could get in more trouble. They could be jailed. They could be imprisoned.

They might even have a more severe punishment laid upon them. So do they submit to the authorities or do they trust the Lord? Do they stand on what Jesus has told them to do and regardless of the threats move ahead? Well, of course, that's exactly what they did. But immediately what they did that enabled them to go against the tide was they prayed as the threats came.

They gathered together and they prayed. Prayer is the pressing need of the hour. I believe being in Europe this past week and seeing the situation there and Europe is an interesting place to get a spiritual perspective from, because Europe is further down the road than we are in regard to atheism, humanism and just a complete and total rejection of the biblical message.

And because they're further down the road in their rejection of God, life becomes increasingly more difficult and more miserable in that place. And being there this past week, it just reminded me again of how vitally important it is that we pray. We're doing other things, we're establishing churches, we're setting up Bible colleges, we're doing evangelism and, you know, we're seeking to make an impact.

But yet, as of yet, we've done so little. And I just got the sense this past week that unless we really pray, unless we make that a major part of what we're doing in this spiritual battle, we're not really going to be able to advance. We're not going to be able to take the land, so to speak.

We're not going to be able to see any significant kind of thing happen. Significant in the sense that it could impact large groups of people in large segments of the society. And so we are at a place where we need to pray as they pray.

Now, as we read through the prayer, there are a couple of things to notice that I think we need to take to heart when we pray ourselves. And so let's look at what it says in verse 24. When they heard that they lifted up their voice to God with one accord and they said, Lord, thou art God, which has made heaven and earth and the sea and all that in them is.

Who, by the mouth of thy servant David, has said, Why did the heathen rage and the people imagine vain things? The kings of the earth stood up and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord and against his Christ. For of a truth against thy holy servant Jesus, who now has anointed both Herod and Pontius Pilate with the Gentiles and the people of Israel were gathered together for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done. So as they go to prayer, the first thing I want you to notice is that they acknowledge.

The sovereignty of God, and I'll tell you, it's very important that we have a good, clear perspective on who it is that we're praying to. It's important that we remember that our God is the Lord. He's the one who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and every living thing.

He is responsible for that. He is the almighty one. He's the omnipotent one.

And again, I was just reminded of how vitally important that reality is as we consider where we find ourselves in the world today. And as we think about making any kind of an impact, we've got to remember that the Lord is on our side. And that he is the maker of heaven and earth.

He's the one who created everything. And he, of course, being the omnipotent one, has power to impart to us that we might accomplish this seemingly impossible task. I'll tell you the task of evangelism, the task of spreading the gospel, the task of making disciples of all nations.

It's just so beyond us. I was talking to a friend yesterday as we were spending some time waiting for our flight in Heathrow Airport. And I was just thinking back over the past week.

And we visited London for a few days and shared at the church there and caught up with some friends. And then we went over to Hungary and we visited our Bible college there in our conference center. And, you know, being there for this past week and catching up with old friends and and just sort of surveying what's happened over the years of ministry there and thinking that we've been involved in ministry there for about 12, almost 13 years now.

And as I was thinking about it and just sort of assessing, you know, what's happened in the past 12 to 13 years at this point, there's some great things that have happened. But at this point, there's nothing so substantial that anybody in those countries, apart from just handfuls of people, have really stood up and taken notice. And I was saying to my friend Dave Shirley, as we were just sort of talking, I was saying, you know, this whole thing of making disciples of all nations, it's really an interesting task that the Lord has called us to.

Because, first of all, to just get to the people is not an easy thing. You know, to actually go to them, to where they are and, you know, whether it be your next door neighbor or somebody in your community or you're going across the world, it's not an easy thing just to actually get to people, to get access to them, to speak to them. And I said, and then to add difficulty to that, when you get to them and tell them that you've come to give them the message of salvation, they don't want to hear it.

So it makes it, you know, doubly difficult. And as I was thinking about that, I was encouraged. As the Lord himself just reminded me that he's the God who made heaven and earth, he's the one who created everything, and although it seems like an insurmountable task, although it just seems so far beyond us, God is not limited at all.

God is able to work mightily and powerfully on my trip. I like to take books with me and read. You know, you have 10, 11 hour flights and so forth, so you don't want to waste your time.

So I picked up a book in the airport in L.A. I picked up a book on Islam and, you know, as you just sort of reading up and studying different things. Well, I picked up this book and I more or less spent the whole trip reading it, apart from doing the other things I was doing. And as I read the history, it was a history of Islam, and as I read through this history, going back to the time of Mohammed 610 and looking at the spread of Islam and looking at the impact of it on the various nations and how, you know, at one point in history, Islam pretty much dominated the landscape as far as religiously speaking.

And just thinking about the one point two billion people that are part of the Islamic religion and looking at this thing and thinking about, you know, what a what a mountain this is. And Lord, how could we ever

penetrate that? How could we ever impact that? How could we ever see any, you know, major change there, reduction in the size by people coming to know the true God? And again, as you know, for myself, as I think through some of these things, on the one hand, there's this sort of overwhelming thing that comes upon you. But the Lord is faithful.

And as I was thinking through this, the Lord would just come back and remind me that he has all power. Jesus said that when he said go into the world and make disciples of all the nations, he first of all reminded them of this vitally important point. He said, all power has been given to me in heaven and on earth.

Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations. So it's a matter of getting the right perspective. It's a matter of realizing.

And that's what these men did here. They were outnumbered. All of the weight of the Jewish civil authority was against them.

And of course, the Jewish civil authority had the Roman authority backing them. So all of the weight of the government was behind that commandment that came for them not to speak at all or to teach in the name of Jesus Christ. So what do they do? They go to prayer.

And the first thing they do is they remind themselves of who it is that they're praying to. Lord, you're sovereign. You're God.

You're the one who made the heaven and the earth. And then they go beyond the omnipotence of God and. They touch on the omniscience of God.

And there he says, by the mouth of thy servant, David has said, why did the heathen rage and the people imagine vain things? And here they remind themselves that God was aware of all of this stuff that was going on. Nothing was hidden from him. As a matter of fact, he knew it was going to happen before it ever even occurred.

And so I think that as they're praying. You know, God certainly doesn't need to be reminded of who he is. Lord, you made heaven and earth as though he would say, oh, you're right, I did.

You know, I forgot that. The Lord doesn't need to be reminded of that, but we need to remind ourselves of that. We need to encourage ourselves with that.

We need to remind ourselves that God made heaven and earth, that God knows everything, that there's nothing that happens that he's not. Aware of totally and completely, not because it happened and he observed it merely, but because he knew it would happen before it ever occurred. And so it's important in prayer that we ourselves have the right perspective on things.

That whatever the issue is, no matter how huge it might seem, no matter how far beyond us, it might appear to be doesn't have to be world evangelism. I'm just talking about that because of my experiences this past week. But whatever the situation is that you might be facing personally.

That seems so beyond you, that is so overwhelming that you can't even think about it because you just can't see how there's any way possible that things could be any different or any better. We've got to remember, we've got to remind ourselves who it is that we are connected to, who it is that we're serving,

who it is that is our father and is for us. It's the Lord who made heaven and earth, the Lord who knows everything, the Lord who actually.

Planned the way things would go in history, so that's what they do first. Then secondly, they come to the petitioning aspect of the prayer. And, you know, this is a good thing to notice and to emulate as well.

It's important when we pray. To, I think, spend some time in meditation upon who God is and even in praise and adoration of who he is before we rush to our petition. But so often our prayer consists primarily of just petition.

I come to the Lord and the very moment I enter his presence, so to speak, I just begin to rattle off the things that are on my mind, the things that I want to see him do. And sometimes I'll be in a group prayer with people and, you know, we'll we'll start to pray and we'll just go right into that petition thing. And quite often I feel as we do that and I'm guilty of doing it myself, but quite often as I feel as we do that, I feel that we we need to back up a little bit.

We need to stop and and take a few steps back and acknowledge the Lord and just take some time meditating on and thinking about who he is and even glorify him and praising him and adoring him for his greatness. I think that's quite often the pattern that we see in the prayers throughout the scripture. There is, first of all, that focusing upon the Lord and then we come to the petition.

We come to our particular request and that's what they did. And so in verse twenty nine and now, Lord, behold their threatenings and grant unto thy servants that with all boldness they may speak thy word by stretching forth thine hand to heal and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy servant Jesus. And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and they spoke the word of God with boldness.

So notice their prayer, interesting prayer, interesting request based upon the circumstances. They didn't pray, Lord, you see these guys threatening us, kill them or Lord, you know that they're opposing your work, get them out of the way or whatever. Things that.

I would have prayed, but rather. In a sense, it was it was almost like, you know, they're irrelevant. It they weren't really so much concerned that God would deal with the opposition as much as God would empower them.

They said, Lord. You see their threats. Grant us boldness that we may speak thy word.

You know, so often. I think we do pray for the wrong things. The opposition is always going to be there.

I'm realizing that more and more as time goes on. And, you know, if it's not coming from one place, it'll come from another place. Satan is opposed to the work of God.

He's opposed to us spreading the gospel. He's opposed to the church being built up and he's got a million and one ways to oppose it. And if one form of opposition ceases, you can be absolutely certain that another one is going to crop up real soon.

We're going to live with constant opposition. There's there's no end to it until the Lord comes back. So if we spend all of our time praying, Lord, get rid of the opposition and thinking, OK, when he does it, then we can advance.

We're never going to go anywhere. Rather, we have to, in a sense, just disregard the opposition and say, Lord, give us boldness. Give us the power just to press through the opposition rather than sitting around waiting for it to go away.

That's true when it comes to spreading the gospel. It's also true when it comes to just growing as an individual believer, when it comes to just taking ground in my own life spiritually. I can't sit around and wait for the enemy to stop attacking me.

I've got to attack back. But isn't it true that so often that's what we do? We just sort of cower back and just wait for the assault to end. But yet we need to be bold.

We need to stand up against the enemy and just press against him. And that's what they're praying for. They're praying that they might receive boldness to speak the word.

But notice how it's worded. They say, granted by servants that with all boldness they may speak thy word by stretching forth thine hand to heal and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy servant, Jesus. So they say, grant us boldness by stretching forth your hand to heal and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of Jesus.

You see what they were implying is that, Lord, as you work, that strengthens us, that emboldens us. Lord, we need to see you working, because if we see you working, that will impart to us the confidence that we need. And that's so true.

You know, when you see the Lord at work. When you can look around and see, man, God is doing something that just gives you confidence. You just you know, you just feel like, yes, the Lord is doing something and I'm part of it and I'm going to jump right in and go for it with everybody else.

It's great to be in a place where God is working because it can give us all that kind of confidence. But we need to pray. And that's what they were really praying.

They were praying for boldness, but that was in a sense that was a bit indirect. The the prayer was that God would work. The prayer was that, Lord, we want to see you exert your power.

We want to see you demonstrate your greatness. And Lord, through that, we will be emboldened. So, Lord, do that stretch out your hand to heal.

You know, we are really, I believe, at a time. Historically. Where we need.

The visible power of God demonstrated in our lives and through our lives and in our fellowships and in our outreach. We need something more than just a program. We need something more than just a slick show.

We need something more than just a good argument. You know, I heard somebody. Witnessing to a person the other day, and as I was listening, they were giving a good argument.

But as I listened, I thought, you know, we need more than a good argument. We need power. Not just, you know, a logical setting forth of the gospel and the ability to show its superiority to something else or the ability to show that the Bible is God's word or, you know, the apologetic approach is good.

It's important. I am committed to it. We need to understand those things and be able to communicate them.

But we need something more than just that. We need the power of God behind what we say. And of course, we've got it in the gospel.

The gospel is the power of God to salvation. We've got to get the gospel out to people. But it's got to go out as Paul, the apostle, declared concerning his gospel.

He said our gospel did not come to you in word only. What does that mean? It means that it's possible that our message could, in a sense, just be words. Without the dynamic of the spirit behind it.

So you see, we need the gospel, but we need that dynamic of the spirit accompanying the gospel. I thought about this before I thinking back when I was a kid and I used to go to church on Sundays and sit and listen to the homilies that were given. And, you know, they came from the Bible.

They would open up and we had an Irish priest, so he would do a reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Luke. You know, every week, you know, the same thing. And I remember sitting there listening to him read it, but I never had any idea what it was really all about.

The words were being read, but there was no dynamic behind it. There was no power. And, you know, that can happen to us as well.

We can have all the right words. We can be saying correct things. We can have better arguments, but we need power.

We need the power of God. I was thinking back as I was again talking to my friend Dave yesterday. Let me just tell you about Dave and I's conversation.

It was really interesting. But I was thinking about because we were talking about Islam and I was thinking about this encounter I had with this Islamic guy a couple of years ago back in New York City. And as I was in this lengthy debate with him, I mean, we must have talked for at least an hour and a half.

And we argued, you know, tit for tat, point for point, back and forth, back and forth. And, you know, at a certain point, I just thought I need more than words. I need power.

God, you've got to do something to break through here. And I really felt that, you know, as we came down to the end of our conversation, God did do that through just a clear explanation of the gospel. And I'll never forget how, you know, after sort of approaching it apologetically and philosophically and in all of these different ways, finally coming down to just this one issue.

What are you going to do about your sin? And how Jesus Christ is the only one who answers that question, the sin question, and how I was able to explain to him the atonement and those things. And I remember at that point it was almost like I could feel the power of God kick in. But we need that power.

We need that power in our lives. And that's what they were praying for. They were praying for that power.

And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit. And they spoke the word of God with boldness. They received the power as they received once again a fresh outpouring of the spirit.

Now, I want you to notice something as we're studying through acts here. Remember, the second chapter of Acts is that key passage on the baptism of the spirit. Acts chapter one, verse eight, as we studied,

Jesus said, Wait in Jerusalem, you'll receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you.

Acts chapter two is the fulfillment of that the day of Pentecost. And there the disciples were all baptized in the spirit. You know, they spoke in tongues and Peter preached the gospel that day.

Three thousand souls were added and so forth. But notice here, here once again, we read that they were all filled with the Holy Spirit. And what we need to understand is that being filled with the spirit is something that occurs over and over and over again in our Christian lives.

It's not a one time event. Some people think of the baptism of the spirit or being filled with the spirit as a one time event. At some point back in 1978 or whatever, I went forward, they laid hands on me and they prayed and I was baptized in the Holy Spirit.

Great. But have you been baptized again? Have you been filled and filling in baptism or synonyms? They're the same thing, because we read in Acts one eight. Jesus said, You're going to be baptized in the spirit.

We're not in one eight, but back in just between four and eight, you're going to be baptized in the spirit. And then when the event occurred in Acts two, it's recorded the day of Pentecost. It doesn't say they were baptized.

It says they were filled. So the baptism of the spirit and the filling with the spirit of the same thing. But here we see from these men who were baptized, filled with the spirit on the day of Pentecost.

Now, some time has passed. A few months perhaps have transpired. And now once again, they are feeling the need for a fresh work of God and for a new surge of his power.

And they pray. And what happens? They are all filled once again with the Holy Spirit. And they spoke the word of God with boldness.

Now, when a person is filled with the Holy Spirit. The main thing that happens is they receive power from God. That's what Jesus said.

He said, The Holy Spirit shall come upon you, you shall receive power. In a lot of circles, when you talk about the baptism of the Holy Spirit, the only thing that comes to mind is tongues. Now, tongues is an aspect of the baptism of the Holy Spirit and is a gift received by some believers.

But when we think of the baptism of the spirit, the moment we think of that, we should not think about tongues. The moment we think of the baptism of the spirit, we should think about power, because that's what the baptism with the spirit is about. And that's what we see here demonstrated.

Demonstrated once again, they received power from the spirit. And what did they do? They spoke the word of God with boldness. Do you ever feel that you lack authority when it comes to ministering the word of God? Do you feel that there's there's not a boldness in your life? Ask the Lord to fill you with the spirit.

Keep asking him to fill you with the spirit that you might do this very thing. Speak the word of God with boldness. You see what we're talking about is what I was saying a moment ago.

It's speaking the word of God in the authority of the spirit, not merely being able to lay out the four spiritual laws. Not merely being able to take one down the Romans road, which is another method of leading

someone to Christ. Not merely being able to put forth a good, strong intellectual argument for the authenticity of the Bible or the superiority of Christ or the resurrection of Jesus or whatever the case might be.

Those are all good things, but we've got to be able to communicate them in the power of the spirit. And so how do we get it? What do we do? We ask for it and we keep asking for it. We keep praying for it.

It should be something that we pray for regularly. That's what they did. They sensed, OK, the opposition is increasing.

They're telling us not to speak the name of Jesus. We need more power. Lord, grant us boldness.

Grant us power. And I really think that today, as God's people, we need to be praying together. We need to be praying individually.

We need to be praying collectively and we need to be praying. God, give us power. God, fill us with your life.

Fill us with that dynamic of the spirit. That's what they did here. And God granted.

And it said in the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul. Neither said any of them that any of the things they possessed was their own, but they had all things in common. And now verse 33.

Listen to this. And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection. Of the Lord Jesus and great grace was upon them.

I love that picture right there. Great power and great grace were upon them. Did you know that the early church, the apostolic church that we're reading about here? Did you know that this was a megachurch? Have you heard about the megachurches? We're living in a day and age of what is known as the megachurch, and we have all over the country megachurches.

And every pastor aspires to pastor a megachurch. And the megachurches today are marked by. A number of things, but let me give you just a few.

The megachurches today are marked by great buildings. Great programs. Great personalities.

Great food. They all have food courts. And great entertainment.

Those are the features, among other things, but those are the key features of the megachurches today. But did you know the early, the apostolic church was a megachurch? Not in the modern sense. But.

The Greek words. Here. Are mega dunamis.

And mega charis. They had. Mega power.

They had great power. That's the word. They had mega grace.

They had great grace. That is what a real megachurch is. A church that has great power and great grace.

It doesn't have anything to do. The true megachurch has nothing to do with great building projects. It has nothing to do with great programs or great personalities.

It has everything to do with great power, the power of God being demonstrated and great grace. Now, think about those two phrases there. There was great power.

And it was through this great power that the apostles witnessed to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And what I envision as I see great power demonstrated in the church is I envision. Conversions taking place, salvation taking place, people's lives being transformed radically, powerfully.

People meeting Christ and coming from every walk of life and just the power of God getting ahold of them and transforming that. That is so glorious when you see the great power of God upon a fellowship. You know, when I was in London last week, I had the opportunity to share with the church there.

And a friend of mine who has been with us here, his name is Tony Reed. A great friend and one of the first fruits of our ministry in London, as he was the caretaker of the school that we used to have our church in. And as he would set up the chairs and do all of his work every week, he would also eavesdrop on the messages.

And through a process of time, he was converted and God did such a powerful work in his life. Just his background, everything, you know, just a life that was ruined by sin. But God just greatly transformed him.

Well, this past Sunday, he brought some friends to church with him. And over the years that we've known each other, he's told me about these people. And we've been praying for them off and on.

And this past Sunday just happened to be that I was going to be in town. He didn't realize it, but they had agreed to come to church with him. And so he brought this motley crew.

And I'll tell you, they were serious, serious sinners. One of them had just been released from prison. He had been in 10 years for murder.

The other two were just, you know, drugs and crime and everything you can imagine. And as I shared that morning afterward, one of them came up for prayer. And as I just began to pray for him, he just began to sob.

He began to just weep and just convulse. And the Lord was touching him. And I just I was so grateful to be part of that.

But, you know, as I'm looking at this person in this devastated life, I'm just thinking, Lord, nothing less than your dynamic power can alter this life destroyed by sin. But that's what we want to see in the church. We want to see the mega dunamis of God, the great power of God coming down and bringing people to salvation, changing their lives, transforming them.

And I think we need to pray for that to happen again. I know it's still happening. But I think we need to pray that it happens in a greater way.

And right here in our own midst, but out from us as well. But then there was great grace. And I just like the ring of that great grace.

But when I think of great grace being upon the fellowship in my mind, I just get a picture. It's hard to even visualize it, but I just get a picture of just a sense of love and peace and joy and just a rightness about the fellowship. That's what that's what they were experiencing.

We need the great power of God today. We need to have his great grace upon us. How do we get it? We get it by praying.

We get it by pleading with the Lord and asking him and calling upon his name. And, you know, every time I go off somewhere, the Lord speaks something to me. And this time he spoke to me.

He said, you need to pray more. And it spurred my heart. This is the way to the great power and the great grace.

That's how they got there. That's how we're going to get there as well. You know, I had an interesting revelation this morning.

Some friends gave me a little package to give to Cheryl. And when I gave it to her and she opened it this morning, it happened to be a couple of books that she picked up over in the UK. One of the books had to do with the Keswick Convention that they have in England.

It's been going on for years and years and years. And Pastor Chuck, back in the late 1980s, he was the keynote speaker a couple of years. And so they after the, you know, the convention is over, they they put things in a book form and you can go down to your Christian bookstore and buy it.

So anyway, they picked this up in the Christian bookstore. And it's some particular British evangelicals who are giving sermons in there, as well as some of Pastor Chuck's sermons. And then there was another book on the the Jesus people, kind of a chronicle of what happened here at Calvary Chapel back in the late 60s and early 70s.

And the whole outpouring of the spirit of God. Anyway, so, you know, Cheryl got these and she was excited to get them. So she called her parents.

She was telling him about it and so forth. And, you know, an interesting thing occurred as we were just standing around in the kitchen. The Lord spoke to me.

And again, I'm just coming fresh off of, you know, my trip and I'm just evaluating the whole thing and not just the trip I had this week, but I'm evaluating the whole ministry in Europe. And I'm sensing that we need something more. God has been gracious in what he's done so far, but we need something more.

We need fresh power. We need a you know, so all of this is stirring in me. And then, of course, there's always the human element of.

I don't know what God wants to do. I mean, maybe I'm just hoping for something that is not going to happen. You know, we have that battle.

And yet this morning, the Lord just in an instant spoke to me and he just showed me that Calvary Chapel is unquestionably no doubt about it. It is the byproduct of a dynamic work of God. It did not exist.

It came into existence almost overnight as the spirit of God was poured out. And the Lord spoke to me today and just said to me, I want to keep doing what I started doing. There's no reason to think that I want

to stop.

And I and as the Lord spoke to me, I was thinking back about revival and the revivals that have occurred in history and how an interesting thing with the revivals. You know, revivals usually strike a certain place and then they go out from that place. But in that particular place, there's a reoccurrence through a process of time.

There's a dynamic outpouring and then there's the immediate results of that. And then time passes and things maybe seem to calm down or cool down a bit or take a different form. But then it sort of flares up again.

And I was thinking about what happened in England from the time of of the Westleys in the 17 mid to late 1700s, all the way through to the 1900s, how there was just a series of revivals that occurred over and over again in that particular region. And all of this in just an instant was swirling around in my mind this morning. And the Lord was speaking to me, saying, I want to keep doing through this ministry what I did before.

It's not over. Don't think it's over. Understand that I want to work and pray for those things that you've been doing over there because this is just the beginning of what we're doing.

And so I was encouraged. I told Cheryl when I got home, she asked me, how's the trip? I said it was weird. I usually come home from a trip all excited.

I said, no, it was weird. I said, I taught on faith. I did taught on faith.

And. You know, the funny thing was, I told her, I said, I taught on faith at the at the sessions and somehow between the conference center and the airport, I lost faith. But the Lord is so faithful.

He's so good. He's spent the last 24 hours renewing my faith. The Lord wants to work.

He is working. But I think he wants to. Make us a megachurch in the biblical sense, not the great buildings, the great programs, the great personalities, the great entertainment, but the great power of God.

The great grace of God being upon us. And our part. Is to pray.

Now, that's assuming that everything else is in order, that you're living in the spirit, that you're not. In the flesh, that you're not in sin. Of course, if that's the case, then you need to get out of that and then start praying.

You need to pray out of that, too. But for those that are with the Lord and in following the Lord, but yet we're sensing that, Lord, we need something more. I believe the word of the Lord to us is that we need to pray.

And we need to seek him as they did here. Because we are under similar circumstances, the opposition is fierce, it's intense. It's coming at us from every conceivable angle and it's not going to stop.

But we've got to press through it. And we can only do that if we have that great power and that great grace and that comes through prayer. And so.

Let's do that. Let's commit ourselves to prayer. Let's pray right now.

Father. Lord, we confess, Lord, that we need your power. And Lord, we confess that we haven't.

Prayed as we ought. Lord, forgive us. Forgive me.

Help us, Lord, to be like these apostles. Lord, as we look at the opposition, Lord, instead of as we do so often, just crying for you to take it away. Help us, Lord, to rise up and press through it.

Lord, bring your mighty power down upon us. Lord, give us that great grace and that great power to glorify you in these days. We pray.

And Lord, I know that not only on a larger sense with the church, but Lord, each of us have our own individual issues and struggles. And obstacles before us. Lord, fill us with your spirit that we might overcome those things.

And Lord, for those here tonight that are struggling with opposition before them, some obstacle, something that is. Keeping them back from entering into all that you have for them, Lord. Help them, Lord, to press through in prayer.

And grant them that great power and grace to overcome. Lord, pour your spirit upon us here at Calvary Chapel. So that we might spread your word to the uttermost parts of the earth.

These things we pray in the mighty name of Jesus and for his sake. Amen. Amen.

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